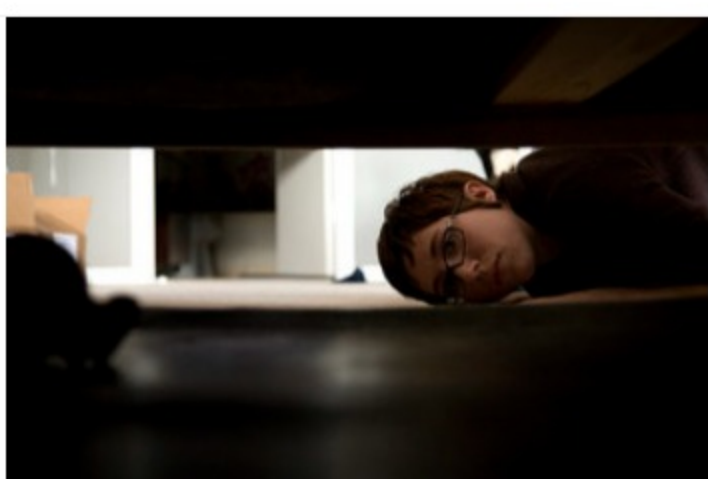




Why Our Faith Must Grow With Our Fears



My kids were watching VeggieTales again, and as I walked into the room I heard Junior Asparagus explaining to his father why he was no longer afraid of the ‘monstrous fears’ he was having earlier in the episode of “Where’s God When I’m Scared.”

As Junior explained that not only was God bigger than the bogeyman, but that Frankencelery was really an actor named Phil from Toledo.

It dawned on me then that there may be something wrong with the approach to fear and trust in God when we talk to our children.

I very much enjoy Big Ideas’ all-audiences approach to humor and education with Veggie Tales, and this particular episode was their very first. I’m not picking on the veggies in particular, but on a larger issue that this is just a particular example.

As Christian parents, we want to encourage our children to trust God, and at the same time soothe their fears. Most of the time, these two objectives are one and the same. In the case of childhood’s fears of the unexplained and monsters, however, they don’t necessarily compliment each other.

In the case of Junior Asparagus overcoming his fear of monsters, he gives two reasons – that he trusts God is greater than anything that could scare him, and that the monsters were nothing to be afraid of anyway.

Think that through for a moment. Restated, the point of the scene is that God is bigger than a nonsense fear. Not much of a lesson there, if at once the fear is belittled as the idea that ‘God is greater’ is taught.

We are called to have faith like a child, and yet [there are studies finding that youth and child-oriented religious instruction is driving those same youth to abandon the Christian faith](#) as they become adults. Belittling childhood fears while trying to teach that God is bigger than your fears is one of those age-appropriate techniques that can backfire.

Instructing youth and children in the faith typically is more intense and regular at a young age. By the time they enter high school, the vast majority are no longer attending a regular Sunday School program, and youth groups become more oriented on fun than instruction in understanding the gospel.

By high school, and into college, the childhood fears that we are taught that ‘God is bigger than’ seem silly and ridiculous. Without further development and growth, through counsel and instruction from our elders, God becomes as silly and ridiculous as those fears He was supposed to help us overcome.

After all, we are only afraid of the things in which we believe exist and can do us harm. Faith is a necessary component of childhood fears. If God’s protection is taught only to those fears we will outgrow, in time we outgrow that faith in a childish god. If we belittle the fears of childhood, we in the same stroke belittle the faith of the child.

Now, I don’t suggest the answer is to teach your five year old about real monsters of which they should be afraid, such as demonic powers, or the worst of mankind’s inhumanity to man. Do not, for instance, belittle the monster under the bed by informing them that real demons – very real fallen angels – want to destroy their relationship with God and their soul. Trying to replace their childhood fears with mature fears will do a great deal of harm.

Do instruct them to trust God will protect them. Build up their faith in God’s protection to be stronger than their faith the monster under the bed can harm them. Teach them to pray when they are afraid, regardless of the fear.

As they get older, communicate with them about their current fears. Go ahead and laugh about being afraid of monsters under the bed when they are a teen, but use it to develop their faith in God to overcome their fears of failure, of being left out or rejected, or of the future. At some point, you will be able to talk to them about your own adult fears and how God’s gift of faith is helping you overcome and work through those fears.

And by all means, do not think that something so intimate will be developed by your pastor, a teacher, or a youth group leader. Our fears are deeply personal, and family are the best people to properly help with that aspect of a growing faith. After all, it is our parents and family that can do the most to foul it up as well.

God is, of course, bigger than the bogeyman. But He is also bigger than the IRS, the terrorists, the future, the past, your financial woes, cancer, and death. Even our fear that our children might abandon their faith. Make sure your children’s faith grows as their fears mature.

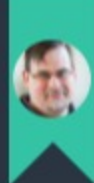
Most of all, make sure your faith in God’s protection grows to eliminate your grown-up fears.



Paul Nowak

Paul Nowak is a husband and father of 7, who also happens to be a writer and author. He has written [The Way of the Christian Samurai](#) among [other books](#).

Share this:



Published by Paul Nowak

Paul Nowak is a husband and father of 7, who also happens to be a writer and author. He has written [The Way of the Christian Samurai](#) among [other books](#).

[View all posts by Paul Nowak](#)

February 17, 2014

Faith

children, fear, youth

[Dying Light and the Eternal Revolution](#)

[Love the Sinner, Hate the Sin, and Charity](#)

TAKE THE DISCUSSION TO THE WIDER WEB. SHARE AND DISCUSS ELSEWHERE, OR REPLY TO THE AUTHOR DIRECTLY AT WORDSMITH -AT- ETERNALREVOLUTION.COM

Search ...



GET BLOG POSTS IN YOUR EMAIL

Get a **FREE** ebook copy of *The Eternal Revolution* when you sign up!

Email address:

Your email address

Sign up

READ MORE BY PAUL NOWAK

[List of Books by Paul Nowak](#)
[Paul Nowak's Page on Goodreads](#)
[Paul Nowak's Page on Amazon](#)

CONNECT WITH SOCIAL NETWORKS

[Eternal Revolution on Twitter](#)
[Paul Nowak on GoodReads](#)
[Eternal Revolution on Facebook](#)

RECENT POSTS

- » [Prophecy of "Guilt" – Guest Post by Caryll Houselander](#)
- » [Fathers as First Warriors & Guardians – Guest Post by Myles Connolly](#)
- » [Condemnation of the Epiphany Riots](#)
- » [Attending JAFAX in Grand Rapids this Weekend](#)
- » [Samaritan is not Synonymous with Charity](#)

CATEGORIES

- » [Christian Samurai](#)
- » [Christmas](#)
- » [Eternal Revolution Updates](#)
- » [Fields of Thought](#)
- » [Heroic Virtue](#)
- » [Charity](#)
- » [Faith](#)
- » [Hope](#)
- » [Uncategorized](#)

SUBSCRIBE TO UPDATES!

Get a **FREE** ebook copy of *The Eternal Revolution* when you sign up!

Email address:

Your email address

Sign up

DISCLOSURES

The super-simple [Privacy Policy and Affiliate Declaration](#) can be found [here](#).

BLOG CATEGORIES

- » [Christian Samurai](#)
- » [Christmas](#)
- » [Eternal Revolution Updates](#)
- » [Fields of Thought](#)
- » [Heroic Virtue](#)
- » [Charity](#)
- » [Faith](#)
- » [Hope](#)
- » [Uncategorized](#)